

Soft Skills of a modern Soldier: Military Ethics

“Order governs the world. The Devil is the author of confusion.” (Jonathan Swift)

Introduction

An episode from history could serve as the prelude to the topic. A few years ago a significant discovery was made in the Austrian National Library in Vienna: a papyrus was found dating from the fifth or sixth century A.D. The paper is a personnel list of *Dux Thebaidis*’ office in Egypt, which today would be termed Thebes Military Command.

In addition to regular soldiers, the document also lists priests, *presbyteroi* (πρεσβύτεροι), and even an archpriest, *protopresbyteros* (πρωτο πρεσβύτερος). Since the fifth century A.D. the word *presbyteros* had been used as a synonym for “Christian priest”. Therefore, it is an obvious conclusion that *presbyteros* was not a military rank, but described a specific function within the army.

It may seem strange that the first proof of a military chaplaincy can be found on a pay roll, but historians are satisfied because this list turned out to be the oldest evidence of a professional Christian military chaplaincy. Before that, pagan priests had run the military chaplaincy. These were the *flamines martiales*, where the priests overseeing the cult of Mars, the Roman god of war, performed religious services on public occasions.

The introduction of a Christian military chaplaincy was made possible by the Roman Emperor Constantine’s Edict of Milan of 313 A.D., when Christianity was officially recognised throughout the Roman Empire. From the beginning, the question of the relationship between the Church and the state was a fundamental challenge for both sides. Today this question is covered – as one among many others – by the modern term *military ethics*.

1. Principles of Military Ethics

1.1. What is Military Ethics?

The basic question of ethics is: What is my conduct in a certain situation? That is the key question of ethics and was also the initial question for Immanuel Kant when he formulated his well-known *Categorical Imperative*:

“Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”

In this context, a basic differentiation is necessary between ethics and morals. While morals are based on rules of behaviour handed down in society, ethics has to do with a conscious reflection on social settings and situations. Nevertheless, ethics has to have a clear foundation and footing. In Western states and societies these are the various human rights declarations (*The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948; *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, 1950; ...). This is why the Austrian Minister of Defence and Sports, Norbert Darabos, spoke of the “humanistic orientation” of the Austrian Armed Forces “towards a peace army.” (cf. *Der Soldat*, 13JAN2010, p.3)

The question of how to act in a certain situation has two different dimensions:

The first dimension concerns classical (military) ethics and aims at the development of accurate theories of ethics. But such theories, especially in the field of military ethics, have to have a distinct practical orientation. And with that the second dimension is addressed: practical implementation.

The human beings and their welfare are situated between theoretical thinking and practical work. The focus of military ethics is on the soldiers, and – but only for the past few years – the civilian population in the area of operations.

1.2. Present-day Operations

During Cold War days there was (at least in Europe) either peace or war, either friend or foe. Things have radically changed since 1990. Nowadays, a traditional, conventional war to defend Austria’s territory is rather improbable.

New threats have emerged, however, such as terrorist attacks. Concerning their international operations, the Austrian Armed Forces not only operate in peacekeeping operations, but in the whole spectrum of the *Petersberg tasks*. In 1997, during the *European summit in Amsterdam*, the tasks were incorporated

into the Treaty on the European Union. The *Petersberg tasks* cover a wide range of possible military operations, ranging from the most simple to the most robust military intervention. They are formulated as: (1) humanitarian and rescue tasks, (2) peacekeeping tasks, and (3) tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. This is not the place to give more information on the *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP), a political advancement of the *European Security and Defence Policy* (ESDP).

One decisive point has to be stressed: the changing role of the civilian population. During the Cold War's attack and defence scenario this issue was not treated in any special way. But in modern scenarios – beyond attack and defence, friend and foe – civilians play an important role in peace-oriented operations.

The task of the modern military is no longer to defeat an enemy, but to establish the preconditions for peace. Military force is therefore more than a "manager of violence" (US-Army, Field Manual 22-100, 1983); military force has become the manager of authority and is there to repulse violence. It has to be stressed at this point that the English language has different expressions for what in German is simply referred to as "Gewalt." The soldier becomes a protector of civilian society – a fact which is addressed in the European discussion of military ethics with the slogan of the "miles protector."

The political aim of military operations can only be peace based on the rule of law. But the experience of the last few decades has shown that military means may be able to create a stable and secure political situation, but they are not able to create a stable, secure and peaceful society.

This aim can only be reached by pursuing a holistic approach in peace-building operations – this was the result of a congress in Stadtschlaining in December 2009 (cf. Österr. Beitrag). Today's military detachments are only one part of an operation, with the military branches of CIMIC or the "protection of cultural assets" as parts of a wider cooperation.

1.3. Interprofessional Network

In former times, military ethics fell into the realms of theology and philosophy. As the armies had more theologians than philosophers, the discussion and teaching of military ethics within the armies were the task of the military chaplaincies. This is why today many soldiers still connect military ethics with theology.

But with the broadening of modern deployments, military ethics required a broader, interprofessional approach. Today in the *Austrian Armed Forces* not only both chaplaincies work together, but also the philosophers, psychologists, political scientist and a number of highly qualified officers.

In 2003 a project at the *National Defence Academy* initiated the establishment of a *Berufsethische Bildung* (BeB); an education in professional ethics. In 2006 the decree for the introduction of BeB was published. While BeB has already been implemented in the different training courses for NCOs, its implementation in officer training still has not been completed. Other armies such as the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundeswehr*) or the Swiss Army (*Schweizer Armee*) have similar projects.

The important relationship between theory and practical experience was mentioned earlier. The interprofessional network is also necessary for the qualified care of soldiers. In modern armies which deploy their soldiers more and more often, the challenges are also increasing for the families of these soldiers. *Familienbetreuung* (family welfare) is therefore fixed as a branch in its own right in the Joint Forces Command (*Streitkräfteführungskommando*).

The training of soldiers in the soft skills required in modern operations takes place before and after deployment. While post-operational care concentrates on psychological issues, one important part of the *Peace Support Officers Course* (PSO-Course) and the Staff Officers Course as well as of *Force Integration Training* (FIT) deals with the cultural framework of the concrete operation.

2. Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Competence for Modern Soldiers

The wide range of skills demanded of modern soldiers results from the holistic approach required in modern operations. On the one hand, soldiers need the classical military skills, such as the handling of the weapons, NBC protection, and other techniques or operational principles. On the other hand, modern soldiers, and especially the commanders of the future (or already today's commanders), should also have the competence to handle the cultural framework of the area of operations. These are the soft skills required of a modern soldier.

In the following passages a few important aspects of military ethics will be covered (there could be many more):

2.1. The *inters*

Modern deployments can be characterized with many terms beginning with *inter-*: *international*, *interoperational*, *intercultural* or *interreligious*. These *inters* refer to the armed forces themselves, as well as to the situation in the area of operations.

Even in the so-called western world, different cultures have different approaches as regards some issues of everyday life, not to mention important realms of professional life.

One example is the approach to time. Both punctuality as well as the behaviour in such circumstances is a question of military culture.

To give another short example referring to a more general cultural matter – I have not been able to verify this short story, but if it was cooked up, it was well done.

In an international operation a contingent from a state with a Hindu tradition joined the international forces. Now, two members of this contingent saw a farmer with his cow, and because the cow was not moving forward, the farmer did what farmers do in such situations. He took a small stick and he gave the cow a slap on its behind. The result was: the farmer was arrested because ... the cow is a holy animal for Hindus and no one is allowed to strike a cow.

This example leads to a topic which can be summarized with the term *cultural gap*. Just because somebody is a soldier, does not necessarily mean that he works well together with another soldier from a different country. It may well be that some soldiers work better with the local population in the area of operations than with the other soldiers.

Theories such as the “clash of civilizations” – irrespective of their accuracy – do not help in such situations. This gap must be dealt with – even if it is not just a gap, but a chasm or massive clash, as in the question of child soldiers. But that is a topic of its own.

A lot of examples of such a *cultural gap* (not “clash”) could be given. Just one more example (also only known by hearsay): the deployment of search and rescue elements of a country of the former Eastern Bloc to an Islamic country following an earthquake there. The local population needed help urgently. In many cases, local authority was identical with the Imam. During a conversation about how to manage the aid, the Imam asked the officer about his faith. The officer had grown up in the categories of *Historic Materialism* with its atheist orientation. So he told the Imam that he did not need God and that he regarded

Him as fiction. In the western world people would accept this as one possibility of thinking, or discuss this point of view – but the Imam immediately broke off the conversation. You can't take a person seriously who has no faith – he has no quality, neither as a person, nor as a leader.

The person who managed to re-establish contact between the Western contingent and the Imam was the Christian military chaplain. The Christian chaplain may have had the wrong faith, but he believed in a God and therefore he represented certain values. That was enough as a basis for contact.

To return to the main topic, the short conclusion is: If you want to make an operation work, the *cultural gap* must be bridged.

2.2. The Decision Making Process

Nowadays, the civilian population is an important part in the planning of military deployments. Civilian matters have to be integrated into military planning. This includes not only the human factor and humanitarian questions, but also, for example, the protection of cultural heritage.

This concerns the command and control procedures, as well as the behaviour vis-à-vis the civilian society. In former times, the soldier defended his country beginning in the border area under well-known cultural circumstances. In modern military deployments, western soldiers are confronted with different cultures, religions or social patterns (which, in this context, are both a part of the culture).

“[...] religion is something too important to leave to theologians,” (Labuschagne, p. 46) because “who misconceives religion, doesn't understand politics.” (C.-E. Bärsch)

In our days, the estimate has to include the civilian situation. Without this, a correct estimate is impossible. If, for example, the staff of the Austrian battalion in Kosovo is not informed about religious or national celebrations or holidays, a precise estimate of the situation will be unworkable. Another example for the *Austrian Armed Forces* was Chad: a European unit is only able to fulfil its mission if it has specific knowledge of the social conditions in the region.

Military ethics is an important tool in the military decision making process; and the accurate estimate of the situation is an important part of the responsibility of military commanders.

But there is also a higher responsibility for the soldiers. The individual soldier has always been the nucleus of any military action. In a conventional war

there is a stern chain of command which more or less strictly defines the tasks and the courses of action. Such a system does not work in modern deployments.

To give one more an example, which is also a construct but based on reality: an observation team is on mobile patrol with their armoured vehicle. Suddenly, they notice a crowd of civilians and they hear gun shots, they can't see more. What should the soldiers do (the key ethical question)? The soldiers have to assess (and come to a clear decision) whether the people are firing on the soldiers with hostile intent, or if a celebration (for example a wedding) is taking place and the shots are fired as a sign of joy, or if an accident has happened and the people want to draw attention to a injured man lying there. Certainly more possibilities could be found.

Such scenarios are not constructs, but reality: shooting as a sign of joy is usual on the Golan Heights, as is putting a mine in the patrol's way, not necessarily to kill or injure UN soldiers, but as a way of disposing of mines found in fields, etc.

In the case of a mine, reporting and waiting for further orders is possible. But in other cases waiting (and not reporting) could have fatal consequences. Lower ranks have to do an exact estimate in a very short time and act in a proper way. If they, for example, shoot at a group of civilians who wanted to save an injured man lying there, or who are celebrating a wedding, and the soldiers cause casualties, riots could be the result.

To act in a positive way in international operations requires intercultural competence.

2.3. Three realms of professional ethics

Combining what was said until now, three different components of professional ethics can be discerned, which, however, overlap:

(1) The first realm is that of *character formation*, which concerns questions of values, personal and military identity, questions of motivation, or the important field of "soldier and family". The huge issue of conscience is also a part of this component, as is the questions of death.

(2) The second realm affects matters of *leadership and command*. Military management always includes *Menschenführung*, which in English is called *leadership*. This is the management of the soldiers and the management of the civilians in the area of operations.

Military leadership means fulfilling personal command responsibility. Therefore military leadership requires competence not only in the classic military abilities, but also in modern skills such as intercultural competence.

(3) Mentioning the classic military abilities leads to the third realm: the military *decision making process*. The civilian population, which often has totally different cultural approaches than the western soldiers, is an important factor in leadership as well as of command and control. The cultural gap is a decisive point in the estimate of the situation.

Soldiers on operations have to remember that there is a difference between peacetime and wartime. That they, the soldiers, will get in contact with civilians only in times of war or conflict, which normally is a time of suffering, unhappiness and unsolved problems.

To stop war and lay down the precondition for a lasting peace is an important part of the task of international operations. Maybe there are other reasons behind such an operation – for example economic motives – but normally these also rely on the construction of a stable and peaceful society.

3. What's war?

Intercultural competence is also a matter of communication which is dominated by the use of language. In debating military affairs, the two keywords are *peace* and *war*. Let us start with the more unpleasant term of the two: war.

3.1. War vs. Krieg

In German the well-known work by Carl von Clausewitz, who died in 1831, is called *Vom Kriege* (published between 1832 and 1843). The English translation is called *On War*. In dictionaries “war” is normally translated with “Krieg” and vice versa. But on the other hand, it is not possible to translate, for example, “war on unemployment” with “Krieg gegen Arbeitslosigkeit”. In German you cannot wage “Krieg” on unemployment; but you can make determined efforts against unemployment, which could be called a hard struggle – but not “Krieg”.

The word “Krieg” is derived from the Germanic root “*kreiga” which means something like “struggle” (cf. Köbler, p. 237). It also has something to do with the modern word “kriegen”, “to get something”. If in former times a prince wanted to get his neighbour's rich lands, he started a “Krieg” to “kriegen”/“get it”. After the war, the land was owned by one or the other of the par-

ties. This was the normal state of affairs in former times, especially in central Europe where there are no strong natural borders, such as coastlines. Therefore the ancient Romans already said: “Si vis pacem para bellum (If you wish for peace, prepare for war)”.

The above-mentioned Carl von Clausewitz was one of the progressive thinkers of modern (security) policy. He established what is nowadays called the primacy of policy; and he meant state policy. Therefore war was a military conflict between two states – what we nowadays call a symmetric conflict.

Such a concept of “war/Krieg” is similar to the Latin concept of “bellum”, to which the word “duel” is related. That is also a symmetric conflict – but between two persons.

The English term “war”, corresponding to the French “guerre”, is also derived from the Germanic root “*kreiga”, or perhaps the Indo-Germanic root “*gueri-” (cf. *ibid.*). But the word developed in a different direction from “Krieg”. The Frankish “*werra” means “to confuse, to perplex”. It is suggested that the original meaning was “to bring into confusion” (cf. Online Etymology Dictionary; art. “war”). Therefore a “war” is something like a struggle to reach an aim, similar to the German “Kampf”.

But enough of sophisticated scientific remarks. On 4 September 2009, on the orders of the German Colonel (GS) Georg Klein, a convoy in the area of Kunduz in Afghanistan was destroyed in an air strike, killing many people including civilians.

That was the beginning of a very intensive political discussion in Germany, which led to the resignation of a minister (Franz Josef Jung), a state secretary (Peter Wichert) and a general (Wolfgang Schneiderhan) – apart from Colonel Klein.

The intensive debate can be reduced to the Shakespeare-like question “war or not war?” or better “Krieg or no Krieg? That is the question.” The German MoD, Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, spoke about “warlike conditions [kriegsähnliche Zustände],” but many people, also soldiers, reduced the statement to a mere “war” in Afghanistan. Therefore, for zu Guttenberg the strike was not right, but understandable.

Certainly every soldier will agree with the “Observer”’s comment in *Der Soldat* (13 January 2010) that during an operation, especially if it is a part of an international peace support operation or a NATO operation, it doesn’t matter if it is war/Krieg or not. For soldiers, survival is at stake.

But also many secondary questions result from zu Guttenberg's message: "War/Krieg" is defined in international law (especially the Charter of the United Nations Organization) as an armed conflict between two states (members of the UN). Who is the "enemy?" Who can define the situation as "war/Krieg" so that a lethal use of weapons is legal? And who makes peace at the end?

The UN-Charter covers the matters of peace and war in Chapter VI "Peaceful Settlement of Disputes" and in Chapter VII "Action with respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression." The two chapters cover the realm of the right to go to war; the "*ius ad bellum*", as it is traditionally called in the Theory of Just War.

But while the UN-Charter clearly differentiates between peace on the one hand (Chap. VI) and war on the other (Chap. VII), very often operations in real life hover somewhere between peace and war/Krieg, and could therefore be called "Chapter VI½" operations. Therefore questions like "Under which conditions is killing in wartime morally allowed or defensible?" – I came across an article with this title only a few weeks ago – are meaningless because they deal with an unlikely military situation: war in its classical meaning.

But the question of how to behave in a war situation leads to the second realm of the law of war: the *ius in bello*, the right conduct during a war. The estimation of the bombardment of the convoy in Afghanistan by the Bundeswehr is simply a question of whether the *ius in bello* is valid or not. Because the Afghanistan operation is not a "war" in the sense of the UN-Charter, the *ius in bello* cannot be the legal basis for this operation.

Nonetheless, from our point of view, "peace" looks different than the current situation in Afghanistan. Together with the political phenomenon of terrorism, the political sciences call these modern conflicts "New Wars." The International Law of War is only valid in a war situation; and in Afghanistan and in most of the "New Wars" there is no "war" in the sense of international law, which makes civil law the legal basis. The terrible consequences, such as, for example, Guantanamo, are one result of this unclear legal situation.

The Anglo-American world has fewer problems with the definition of an operation. War is a political and military struggle for a solution in the interest of the state that dispatches forces.

3.2. “The wind beats?”

In her collection of essays *Der König verneigt sich und tötet* (The King bows and kills), first published in 2003, the winner of the 2009 Nobel Prize for Literature, Herta Müller, born in the Banat as a member of the German minority in Romania, writes about the differences between languages. In the dialect of her German speaking village in Romania people say “der Wind geht (The wind goes)”. In the German standard language the correct expression is “der Wind weht (The wind blows)”. In Romanian it is called “vîntul bate”, the wind “beats.” Herta Müller describes the impression of the Romanian idiom: “When you said ‘the wind beats’ you heard the sound of the movement [...]” (op. cit., p. 24)

It’s the same with the opposite expression: In German people say “der Wind hat sich gelegt (the wind has lain down).” In Romanian the term is called “vîntul a stat (the wind has come to a stop)”. Müller explains: “That is steep and vertical.” (ibid., p. 25)

She gives another short example: “The lily, crin, is masculine in Romanian. [Lilie, crin, ist im Rumänischen maskulin.]” In German it is feminine. “Certainly she, the lily, looks at you in another way than he, the lily. In German you meet a lily-dame, in Rumanian a lily-sir.” [Sicher schaut DIE Lilie einen anders an als DER Lilie. Man hat es auf Deutsch mit einer Liliendame, auf Rumänisch mit einem Herrn zu tun.] (ibid.)

And Herta Müller draws a conclusion: “The wind [and the lily] is only one example of the constant shifts between different languages concerning the same facts. Nearly every sentence reflects a different point of view. The Romanian language perceived the world as different as the language’s words were different. [...] From one language to the other there are metamorphoses.” (ibid., p. 25)

Such observations touch upon a very important point: different cultures with different languages think in different categories. That also concerns the previously discussed question of “war or no war.” The Anglo-American world is defined by the English meaning of the word “war” which is different to the German understanding. German thinking – reflecting the German language – is defined by an exact assignment of categories: ‘a’ or ‘b’, peace or war; nothing else between these two categories. Kant’s Categorical Imperative is the well-known example of categorical thinking: You have to do that in this way – nothing else. Such a way of thinking in categories also corresponds to a juridical mindset, descended from Roman Law.

Due to historical experience, war is portrayed in central Europe as the worst case, as “non- and/or anti-politics (Un-Politik)”, as the philosopher Heimo Hofmeister stated (p. 68). It is unethical to occupy the property of another. But recent events have started a new development, as is reflected in Herfried Münklers “New Wars.”

Compared to this, the English language and thinking have broader approach. Webster’s *Comprehensive Dictionary* defines “war” as “1) A contest between or among nations or states, or between different parties in the same state, carried on by force and with arms. 2) Any act or state of hostility; enmity; strife; also, a contest or conflict [...]” (p. 1416) War in this relationship belongs, very pragmatically, to the realm of politics; no more, no less.

3.3. “Peace” vs. “Friede”

Again *Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary*: Peace is “1) A state of quiet or tranquillity; freedom from disturbances or agitation; calm; repose. 2) Specifically, absence or cessation of war. 3) General order and tranquillity; freedom from riot or violence. 4) A state of reconciliation after strife or enmity. 5) Freedom from mental agitation or anxiety. [...]” (p. 927) German speaking people can agree with those definitions.

But behind “peace” and “Friede” – similar to “war” and “Krieg” – there are different concepts which impact on present political and strategic thinking. An answer can be found, again, in etymology. The Old High German word “fridu,” going back to the 8th century, means “peace, protection, security, harmony.” (cf. Köbler, p. 137) A compositum of the word is “frīthof” (cf. *ibid.*, p. 138) which means a peaceful court (“-hof”), a place which is enclosed by a fence (“einfrieden; eingefriedet”). According to this image, peace occurs and remains stable through a secure boundary. If the borders of a state are secure against warring neighbours, peace reigns. There is also an English saying: “Good fences make good neighbours!”.

Such thinking was understandable, similar to what was said about “war,” in the central European situation, as this was characterised by many different dominions, and later states, one next to the other. These small political units had no other choice but to co-exist. But “peace” is more than the absence of war, as it is often described, especially in German discussions.

Two thousand years ago one state had the hegemony, the Roman Empire – its successor, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, was for most of the time of its existence without any political force and not anything close to an “Empire”. But the old Roman Empire was the only substantial political power

in its day, especially after the Punic Wars (up to the third cent. B.C.). Strategically, nearly all wars waged by the Roman Empire were asymmetric wars close to its borders, against local authorities or warlords. The Roman Empire had no strict border line, but a more or less wide border zone with more or less Roman political influence.

To stabilize this border zone, the Roman Empire entered official or unofficial contracts and agreements with these local authorities and warlords. The result was the “Pax Romana,” the stable state of the Roman Empire, based on a system of different contracts and agreements. “Pactum” is the Latin word for such an agreement, and the result of such stabilization, reached by a pactum, is “pax.” A *pactum* is not a contract between two similar political partners; it’s not symmetric, which is obvious in comparison with the term *foedus*. A *foedus* is a contract as we understand it; if one of the partners breaches the contract, the other can instigate legal proceedings against the other. That wasn’t possible with a *pactum*. If a warlord broke the *pactum*, the *Roman Empire* had to send troops. Besides: an International Court hadn’t been established in those days.

By dint of such a *pactum*, the warlord of the local authority became a vassal of Rome, and the border zone was pacified by the superiority of the *Roman Empire* as a part of the *Pax Romana*.

That is one of the most important characteristics of an *imperium*, an empire: it has no strict borderlines but zones of interest, in which an empire makes efforts to rule by political and military power; even if the region isn’t (officially) part of the empire.

Looking at the old days of the *Imperium Romanum*, current questions can be addressed too. Five years ago, the political scientist Herfried Münkler published his work on Empires (*Imperien*). He sees parallels between the Roman Empire and the United States of America and also encourages the European Union to think about a new conception of its area. In its present state, the EU has to decide whether a state should be allowed to join the Union or not. That corresponds to the concept of “Friede”. But Münkler thinks about establishing a zone of states which are not full members of the Union, but associated. That would follow the concept of the *Roman Empire*, but also the US-American concept, which is why the world order, which the USA is striving for, is sometimes called *Pax Americana*.

Such considerations allow a further conclusion to be drawn about “war”. War is the political struggle, performed by military force, to establish a world order, even against the resistance of some states which are then part of the axis of the unwilling.

Military operations do not necessarily have to be a (political) symmetric war, with which especially the USA has had some bad experiences (Vietnam). Political endeavours try to come up with peaceful solutions, which avoid military struggles and “wars” in the sense of the Germanic “*werra”. Military efforts aim at stabilizing failing or failed states and societies, to create a peaceful situation, in a political connection (*pactum*) with the USA.

4. Epilogue

Because of the modern understanding of “war” and “peace”, the present slogan of “peace support” – used also by the AAF – is simultaneously right and wrong. Wrong, because the motivation behind most of the operations is not an unselfish commitment to global or perhaps universal peace in an idealistic sense. The reasons for an operation, also for Austria, are straightforward political considerations. But the slogan is right in the sense that normally the operations – as the NATO term “crisis response operations (CRO)” implies – react to a crisis and support peace.

In certain operations, i.e. in Afghanistan, the conviction is growing that a mere military deployment is not able to bring about (social) peace, economic prosperity and stable and democratic social structures. But the military is able to build up a sphere of law, order and security as a precondition for a peace. The armed forces operations and the civilian peace-building measures work hand in hand, and are part of the same process, but do not necessarily have to occur concurrently. Very often, the military operation lays the ground for the civilian efforts.

Concerning recent developments, the introduction of a “*ius post bellum*” has been demanded. This *ius post bellum* would be a corpus and mechanism of rules for the time after a conflict during an international operation. At a rough estimate, in approximately half of post-war countries, conflicts erupt again within five years following the end of the war.

The peace memorandum of the *Evangelical Church in Germany* (“Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland”), published in 2007 with great ecumenical and secular agreement, requires therefore a “multidimensional concept of peace.” (cl. 78/p. 53) Part of that concept is also law and order enforced by an internationally legitimated power. For the military, what is crucial for the success of an operation is the co-operation with civilian governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the local authorities and the locals as the whole.

In this connection, the peace memorandum demands that “precedence be given to the civilian realm.” “Peace policy can only be successful, if International Law is enforced, if civilian conflict management is strengthened institutionally and materially, and if the principle of giving the civilian realm precedence in dealing with conflicts is consolidated as a guiding principle.” (cl. 124/p. 80)

“*Si vis pacem, para pacem* (If you wish for peace, prepare for peace)”, is the résumé of such a concept (cf. cl. 75/p. 52). Such a concept applies to the UN-Charter with its aim of “the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples”. (art. 55)

To close the circle: key competences for modern soldiers are competences in civil-military cooperation with precedence given to the civilian realm, also cultural awareness, and intercultural competence.

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